

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 024921

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TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 024921

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

FOLLOWING REPEAT BRIDGETOWN 0182 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
GEORGETOWN KINGSTON PORT AU PRINCE PORT OF SPAIN 30 JANUARY 76.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 0182

KINGSTON FOR USOAS AMBASSADOR MAILLARD
PORT AU PRINCE FOR USOAS AMBASSADOR MAILLARD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, XL

SUBJ: OAS CHARTER REFORM, US PROPOSALS

REF: STATE 018860

SUMMARY

WE VIEW WITH CONCERN PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH ASSOCIATE
STATE MEMBERSHIP FOR MINI-STATES. MOST IF NOT ALL CANDI-
DATES FOR SUCH MEMBERSHIP ARE LOCATED IN OUR AREA OF JURIS-
DICTION. WE BELIEVE THEY WOULD REJECT PROPOSAL AS DEMEANING
TO THEM AND DO NOT BELIEVE THEY CAN BE INDUCED TO ACCEPT ANY
STATUS LESS THAN FULL MEMBERSHIP. OUR SPONSORSHIP OF SUCH
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PAGE 02 STATE 024921

PROPOSAL WOULD GIVE RISE TO RESENTMENT TO DETRIMENT OUR

OVERALL INTERESTS IN THE AREA AND MIGHT CAUSE MINI-STATES AND THEIR FREINDS AND NEIGHBORS TO VOTE AGAINST US IN OAS. WE DOUBT THAT LATIN AMERICANS WOULD SUPPORT US ON THIS ISSUE. US PROBABLY STANDS TO GAIN MORE THAN IT WOULD LOSE FROM ADMISSION OF MINI-STATES AS FULL MEMBERS, SINCE THEY WOULD LIKELY VOTE WITH US MORE OFTEN THAN NOT. WE STRONGLY URGE PROPOSAL BE ABANDONED.

END SUMMARY

1. WE NOTE WITH CONCERN PROPOSAL IN PARA 6, REFTEL, WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH A NEW ASSOCIATE STATE MEMBERSHIP FOR SO-CALLED MINI-STATES. THE AUTHORS OF THIS PROPOSAL HAVE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT A LOW ASSESSED CONTRIBUTION WOULD MAKE PROPOSAL ACCEPTABLE TO THE MINI-STATES AND THAT PROPOSAL WOULD INCREASE THE STAKE OF FULL MEMBERS IN EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS. THEY ALSO RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN CATEGORIS OF STATES IS A TOUCHY BUSINESS IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

2. MOST, IF NOT ALL THE CANDIDATES FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP -- I.E., THE PUTATIVE MINI-STATES (THE TERM ITSELF IS A SUBJECTIVE ONE: HOW SMALL IS "MINI"? WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA?) -- ARE LOCATED WITHIN AREA OF THIS EMBASSY'S JURISDICTION. (REFTEL MENTIONS "ST. KITTS, ANGUILLA, ETC."; ANGUILLA, WHICH IS ABOUT TO REVERT TO COLONIAL STATUS, IS NOT AMONG THOSE LIKELY TO SEEK INDEPENDENCE IN NEAR FUTURE, BUT ANTIGUA, ST. KITTS, ST. LUCIA, ST. VINCENT, AND PERHAPS DOMINICA ARE.) WE BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT WE ARE IN A BETTER POSITION THAN ANYONE ELSE TO COMMENT ON ACCEPTABILITY OF THE PROPOSAL TO THOSE POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY IT.

3. IT IS OUR CONSIDERED AND STRONGLY-HELD OPINION THAT THE IDEA WOULD BE REJECTED OUT OF HAND BY ALL THE PRESENT WEST INDIES ASSOCIATED STATES. WITH THEIR PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS, THEY ENJOY FULL INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT; ONLY DEFENSE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS REMAIN IN BRITISH HANDS, AND EVEN IN THESE AREAS HMG HAS DELEGATED NUMEROUS RESPONSIBILITIES TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. NEVERTHELESS, ALL FIVE ARE MANIFESTLY DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR STATUS AND AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 024921

HAVE STATED THEY INTEND TO MOVE TOWARD INDEPENDENCE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THEY RESENT NOT BEING INDEPENDENT, NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE THEY ARE NOW DISADVANTAGED AS BECAUSE THEY REGARD THEIR STATUS AS CONSTRICTING AND DEMEANING. FOR SAME REASON, ONCE THEY ARE INDEPENDENT, THEY WOULD REFUSE TO ACCEPT ANY CATEGORY OF MEMBERSHIP IN AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT WAS LESS THAN ANY OTHER SOVEREIGN STATE ENJOYED, OR THAT SUGGESTED REVERSION TO

THEIR PREVIOUS STATUS, EVEN IF ONLY IN A LIMITED ASPECT OF THEIR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. INDEED, THE VERY TERM "ASSOCIATE" IS A NEGATIVE ONE FROM THEIR STANDPOINT BECAUSE OF THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH ASSOCIATED STATEHOOD. TO THEM, IT MEANS NEITHER MORE NOR LESS THAN "SECOND CLASS."

4. WE CAN ENVISAGE NO INDUCEMENT THAT WOULD INFLUENCE THEM TO TAKE A DIFFERENT POSITION ON THIS ISSUE. CLEARLY, A REDUCED ASSESSMENT WOULD NOT BE SUCH AN INDUCEMENT. NOT ONLY ARE THEY WILLING, IF NEED BE, TO PAY THE PRICE INTERNATIONAL PRESTIGE REQUIRES; THEY ARE DOUBTLESS AWARE THAT QUESTION OF LEVEL OF ASSESSMENT IS SOMEWHAT ACADEMIC, SINCE MEMBER STATES ARE NOT EXPELLED FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES.

5. MOREOVER, IF EVER THERE WAS A TIME WHEN DISTINCTIVE CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP COULD HAVE BEEN DEVISED, IT IS NOW PAST. GRENADA, NOW A FULL MEMBER, WOULD CERTAINLY NOT AGREE TO REVERT TO ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP. IF THAT COUNTRY WITH A POPULATION OF 100,000, REMAINS A FULL MEMBER, HOW CAN ST. LUCIA WITH AS GREAT OR GREATER A POPULATION BE DENIED SIMILAR MEMBERSHIP? (IT IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT ALL FIVE ASSOCIATED STATES WILL BECOME MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH, WHICH ALREADY INCLUDES MUCH SMALLER NAURU, AMONG OTHER "MINI" MEMBERS.)

6. IT IS IMPORTANT, TOO, IT SEEMS TO US, TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF CERTAIN PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT NATURE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COUNTRIES OF THE CARIBBEAN AND IMPLICATIONS THESE HAVE FOR OUR SPONSORSHIP OF PROPOSAL UNDER DISCUSSION. THERE IS A WIDESPREAD BELIEF IN THIS AREA THAT US SHOWS LITTLE INTEREST IN ITS CARIBBEAN NEIGHBORS BECAUSE WE ARE RICH AND LARGELY WHITE, WHILE THEY ARE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 024921

POOR AND BLACK. ANY INITIATIVE ON OUR PART THAT WOULD CONFER SECOND-CLASS STATUS ON CARIBBEAN MINI-STATES IN OAS WOULD BE SEEN AS FURTHER CONFIRMING THIS BELIEF AND WOULD BE RESENTED NOT ONLY BY THOSE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BUT ALSO BY LARGER STATES WITH LIKE RACIAL BACKGROUNDS AND PERCEPTIONS. INDEED, BECAUSE OF THESE FACTORS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE RECEIVED IN THIS AREA GENERALLY WITH INDIGNATION, IF NOT RAGE, AND WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO OUR OVERALL INTERESTS HERE.

7. WE ARE AWARE THAT SOME LATIN AMERICANS ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT ADMISSION OF MINI-STATES TO OAS ON EQUAL FOOTING, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT, IF THE LATTER PERSIST, THEY WILL GET THEIR WAY. THE EQUALITY OF SOVERIGN STATES IS A CHERISHED CONCEPT IN LATIN AMERICA, AND SOME SMALLER

L.A.'S MIGHT WELL BE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE REDUCTION OF THEIR OWN STATUS. LATIN AMERICAN STATES ALSO PROFESS BE THIRD WORLD-MINDED, AND MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE; THEY WOULD THEREFORE BE RELUCTANT TO POSITION THEMSELVES ON THIS ISSUE AGAINST POTENTIAL MEMBERS OF THAT BLOC. FUTHERMORE, HOW CAN A GOVERNMENT LOGICALLY VOTE FOR ADMISSION OF SEYCHELLES (POP. 50,000) TO UN AS A FULL MEMBER AND INSIST ON LESS THAN FULL MEMBERSHIP FOR A STATE TWICE AS LARGE IN OAS?

8. FROM STANDPOINT OF ADVANCING OUR OWN INTERESTS IN OAS, WE PROBABLY STAND TO GAIN MORE FROM INCLUSION OF THESE STATES AS FULL MEMBERS THAN FROM THEIR EXCLUSION. HISTORIES AND TRADITIONS OF US AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN ARE CLOSELY INTERTWINED, WE SHARE COMMON LANGUAGE, AND ETHNIC TIES ARE IMPORTANT. THE SUPPORT GIVEN BY BARBADOS AND GRENADA TO US IN INTERNATIONAL FORA TO DATE STRONGLY SUPPORTS BOTH CONTENTION THAT MINI-STATES, TOO, WILL BE WITH US MORE OFTEN THAN AGAINST US, AND A CASE FOR THEIR INCLUSION IN OAS AS FULL MEMBERS.

9. IN SUMMARY, OUR VIEW IS THAT PROPOSAL FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP HAS NO PROSPECT OF SUCCESS AND IS NOT IN ACCORD WITH OUR INTERESTS IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN. IF WE PURSUE THE MATTER, WE WILL NOT ONLY FIND OURSELVES IN A MINORITY ON THIS ISSUE BUT WILL HAVE INCURRED RESENTMENT BOTH OF

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 024921

NEW MINI-STATES AND THEIR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS. THIS COULD LEAD TO VOTING BY CARIBBEAN STATES AGAINST US IN OAS ON OTHER MORE IMPORTANT ISSUES (NOT TO MENTION OTHER LIKELY UNFORTUNATE CONSEQUENCES SUGGESTED ABOVE). FOR THESE REASONS, WE THEREFORE STRONGLY URGE THAT PROPOSAL BE ABANDONED.BRITTON UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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